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France: The government's proposal to seek temporary decree powers for social and economic reforms is a bold attempt to force the National Assembly into line.

In effect, De Gaulle is challenging the opposition to show whether or not it can overturn Premier Pompidou. The threat of immediate dissolution of the assembly and new elections is implicit in this challenge.

Although the Gaullist coalition is one vote shy of a majority in the assembly, support for government policies had been expected. Both left and right wings of the coalition, however, want to show a greater degree of independence. Moreover, the opposition forces have indicated their intention to reassert the assembly's role as a genuine legislative forum.

De Gaulle is convinced a censure motion cannot get a majority. By using socioeconomic reform as the issue, he hopes to force the Communists and Francois Mitterrand's Federation of the Left to oppose a measure their supporters want. Some social reform measures in prospect are not to the liking of Valery Giscard d'Estaing and his Independent Republican group. Giscard is held in line in the government coalition, however, by the hope of acceding to power after De Gaulle's departure. His future depends on retaining the support of the hard-line Gaullists.

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THAILAND



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Thailand: Communist terrorists apparently are strengthening their position in the Malayan border area.

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Although the CTO is targeted against Malaysia, there have been unconfirmed reports that the organization has recently begun to cooperate with Thai Communist insurgents. Such a development would probably cause Bangkok to increase its counterinsurgency effort in the border area, a contingency which a CTO build-up might be designed to meet.

In the northeast, no significant new developments have been reported in recent weeks. Recently available statistics for the first quarter of this year show a marked increase in Communist activity in that area, at least partially a reflection of an effort to counter the comprehensive counterinsurgency program inaugurated in January.

(Map)

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

The United States Intelligence Board on 27 April 1967 approved the following national intelligence estimate:

NIE 75/76-67, "Prospects in the Horn of Africa"

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